

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Kindly amend the specification as follows:

1. Please replace the paragraph on page 17, lines 19-28, which begins with "Next, we shall...," with the following new paragraph:

Next, we shall briefly describe the handling of table-format data prerequisite to the present invention, namely the form in which table-format data is managed. In order to achieve high-speed searching, tabulating and sorting of table-format data, and in order to join a plurality of tables of table-format data in the desired manner, the present inventors thought of the construction of table-format data that has a specific data format (Japanese Patent Application No. 10-227278) and a method of joining table-format data which has said specific data format (Japanese Patent Application No. 110-151156). In the present invention also, fundamentally, table-format data is constructed based on the techniques disclosed in this applications as a stipulated set of information blocks and searching, tabulating and sorting are performed using them.